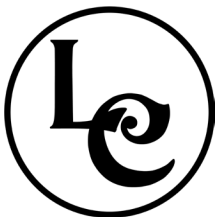


Anarchism, Race, and Free Expression in  
Home Colony Periodicals, 1897–1908

The Louise Crowley Library aims to preserve the material efforts of anarchists in the Puget Sound region. While we seek to preserve our history, we do not seek to get ourselves stuck in the past. To us, anarchism isn't something that happened long ago, to other people, but a current that continues to flow, that we are a part of, influencing it while it influences us.



THE HOME COLONY HAS BEEN THE OBJECT OF A GREAT DEAL OF MISUNDERSTANDING, both willful and ignorant, over the years.<sup>1</sup> Much of the misunderstanding during the colony's heyday (1896–1912) fits into a pattern of distortion applied to the political philosophy of anarchism by its ideological opponents in America.<sup>2</sup> Even recent and otherwise very capable reassessments of Home, such as contained in Charles LeWarne's PhD dissertation "Communitarian Experiments in Western Washington, 1865–1915," do not completely avoid the fallout from this pattern of distortion. Lewarne titles his chapter on Home with the question. "Home. Nest of Anarchy or Haven of Individualism?" and opts for the latter characterization.<sup>3</sup> While this description of the Home Colony has more merit than the florid caricatures of the turn-of-the-century, anarchist-baiting mainstream newspapers, it too seems flawed.

This paper attempts to discover what Home initially tried to be by situating it within the context of the contemporary American anarchist movement, which many Home residents and the community's periodicals viewed themselves as being part of. The paper goes on to examine how two issues, race and freedom of

- 1 The Subcommittee of the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization summed up two decades of Home's existence saying. "It has long been an eyesore to the decent people in that section of the country, and many an effort has been made to get rid of it, but so far without success." Communist and Anarchist Deportation Cases, Washington, Government Printing, 1920
- 2 See Nhat Hong's monograph, *The Anarchist Beast: The Anti-Anarchist Crusade in Periodical Literature 1884-1906*, Minneapolis, Soil of Liberty, 1980.
- 3 Lewarne, Charles. "Communitarian Experiments in Western Washington, 1805-1915. PhD dissertation. University of Washington. 1969. For example: "The Home anarchists were mostly of the 'individualist' school " p. 432. "when the residents substituted "individualist" for "anarchist " they perhaps described themselves more precisely." p. 433; "the individualists of Home." pp. 439 and 502

expression, were treated in two of the Home colony's newspapers and tries to place their discussion of these issues in the evolution of American public debate on them.

## INDIVIDUALIST OR ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST?

The American anarchist movement provides the basis for assessing Lewarne's characterization of Home. All late-19th and early-20th century anarchists agreed on the pernicious nature of external authority and coercion and the desirability of self-rule. Beyond this, there were differences of approach between individualist and socialist anarchists in the turn of the century American movement regarding the relationship of property to anarchist social organization. These distinctions were extensively debated and clarified within the different strands of anarchism.<sup>4</sup> Lewarne claims that "the tenuous links between individualist-anarchists and the anarcho-communists were almost completely severed over controversies involving origins, goals, methods, and personalities."<sup>5</sup>

Individualist anarchists insisted private property "was the cornerstone of personal freedom" while anarchist-communists believed in social ownership and use of the means of production on a voluntary basis.<sup>6</sup> The labels notwithstanding, the free individual figured centrally in both conceptions of anarchism. The libertarian communism of Peter Kropotkin, which had wide currency at the time Home was formed, relied on the free individual as the basic social unit to initiate the new socialist order through voluntary association, cooperation and mutual aid.

There was a balance, though not necessarily tension, between individuality and sociability in the anarchist communist approach.<sup>7</sup> It did not provide a

4 Paul Eltzbacher, German law professor, published a book entitled *Der Anarchismus* (translated into English and published by Benjamin Tucker as *Anarchism: Exponents of Anarchist Philosophy* in 1908) in 1900 which attempted to clarify the different elements and differences among anarchist theoreticians. This book is a reasonably good contemporary explication of anarchism to measure the politics of Home against.

5 Lewarne Charles "Communitarian Experiments in Western Washington, 1885–1915." PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1969, p. II.

6 de Cleyre, Voltairine "The Making of an Anarchist." reprint of 1914 text. London, Black Bear Pamphlet, 1978.

7 A cautionary note must be sounded here that regard for individuality is not the same as

Hong, Nhat. *The Anarchist Beast: The Anti-Anarchist Crusade in Periodical Literature 1884–1905*, Minneapolis, MN, Soil of Liberty, 1980.

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 de Cleyre, Voltairine. *The Making of an Anarchist*, reprint of 1914 text, London, Black Bear, 1978.  
 Goldman, Emma. *The Place of the Individual in Society*. Buffalo, NY, Friends of Malatesta, pub date unknown.

detailed prescription for social organization, but was largely content to describe a future anarchist society based upon the "free expansion of individuals into groups and of groups into associations, free organization from the simple to the complex as need and inclination are felt."<sup>8</sup> There was also the strong sense that the attractions of like-mindedness would create communities of interest in which individuals would "take upon themselves the duties to society."<sup>9</sup> This anarchist dynamic of social solidarity was articulated by Luigi Galleani in 1908 this way:

...we aspire to realize the autonomy of the individual within the freedom of association, the independence of his thought, of his life, of his development, of his destiny, freedom from violence, from caprice and from domination of the majority, as well as of various minorities; and when we refer to libertarian communism we are trying to find an economic *ubi consistam* [where should I stand] in which this political autonomy of the individual may find enlightened and happy reality.<sup>10</sup>

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individualism. Emma Goldman has noted that "Individuality is not to be confused with the various ideas and concepts of Individualism, much less with that 'rugged individualism' which is only a masked attempt to repress and defeat the individual and his individuality. So-called Individualism is the social and economic laissez-faire: the exploitation of the masses by the classes by means of legal trickery, spiritual debasement and systematic indoctrination of the servile spirit, which process as known as 'education.' That corrupt and perverse 'individualism' is the strait-jacket of individuality. It has converted life into a degrading race for externals, for possession, for social prestige and supremacy. Its highest wisdom is 'the devil take the hindmost.'"

"America is perhaps the best representative of this kind of individualism, in whose name political tyranny and social oppression are defended and held up as virtues; while every aspiration and attempt of man to gain freedom and social opportunity to live is denounced as 'un-American' and evil in the name of that same individualism." Goldman, Emma. *The Place of the Individual in Society*, reprint, Buffalo, NY, Friends of Malatesta, date unknown, pp. 3–4.

- 8 Peter Kropotkin, quoted in Paul Eltzbacher's *Anarchism. Exponents of Anarchist Philosophy*, New York, Chips Bookshop, 1958, p. 105.
- 9 Ibid., p. 106
- 10 From a series of columns entitled "La Fine dell'Anarchismo?" that ran in the American Italian-language periodical *Cronaca Sovversiva* from August 17, 1907–January 25, 1908. Collected and reprinted in English translation as *The End of Anarchism?*, Orkney, Scotland and Minneapolis, Minnesota, Cienfuegos Press, 1982, p. 35.

Home's advocates (i.e. its founders and journalists) were clear that the autonomy of the individual and solidarity were interdependent and central to their social experiment. To describe their politics as individualism or to say that "The founders [of Home] would have professed that individualism and the emphasis on personal liberties and freedom were a rejection of communal life," as LeWarne does, are unclear at best, and inaccurate at worst.<sup>11</sup>

The founders of the Home Colony launched their experiment after firsthand experience with an unsuccessful colony at Glennis, Washington on the slopes of Mount Rainier in Pierce County. Partly from this experience, but also from the negative experience of other contemporary state-socialist colonies, Home was conceived of as a community where social bonds and responsibilities were voluntarily given and not formally required or imposed.<sup>12</sup> The Mutual Home Association's stated purpose was limited to assisting "its members in obtaining and building homes for themselves and to aid in establishing better social and moral conditions."<sup>13</sup> All prescriptions for social and economic order were intentionally left out of the Association's articles and left to the organic and voluntary contributions of its members. O. A. Verity, one of Home's founders, described the Home Mutual Association as "organized by people who had passed through the state socialistic idea of co-operation and finding true liberty an impossibility under State Socialism they broadened out into the Ideas advocated by Anarchy or voluntary socialism" in an early issue of *Discontent*. He went on to explain:

- 11 LeWarne, Charles. "Communitarian Experiments in Western Washington, 1885–1915." PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1969, p. 407. There may be a question of definitions here. For example, Anita (Toots) Rubenstein Snyder, in a oral history project of the Lower Peninsula Historical Society in 1978 stated "Young people have been interested in what kind of community it was. And yet it really never was a commune. It was really a cooperative colony. They have a lot of these in Israel. They call them Moshas, its a cooperative colony, where everybody works together but has their own land and their own home. But they work for the common interest. Really, that's what Home was." "Memories of Home," p. 7, Vol. 3 "Compilation of writings and Photos Concerned with the History of Home, Washington."
- 12 By contrast the 1903 *By-Laws of Equality of the Brotherhood of the Co-operative Commonwealth* needed ten pages to list forty-three provisions to establish rules and regulations even down to determining standard sizes and designs for members' houses.
- 13 Articles of Incorporation and Agreement of the Mutual Home Association, Jan. 17, 1898.

"Home Colonists Up for Contempt," *Tacoma Times*, January 17, 1917.

"Home Colony Up Again," *Tacoma Times*, Aug. 24, 1916.

"Not Many Places Like Home." *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, March 6, 1902.

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As with the issue of race, however, Morton and *The Demonstrator* were far ahead of their reform and radical compatriots on the question of free expression. It is also not easy to assess how much of a contribution Home's court cases and the efforts of Morton and the newspapers made to public debate and understanding about the meaning and application of the First Amendment. However, *The Demonstrator* represents one of the first attempts (if not the very first) to devote an American periodical to discussing the subject, articulating a system of freedom of expression and monitoring the forces and activities of state and private personalities and institutions which tried to undermine it. In this sense, Morton and *The Demonstrator* were a precursor of and part of the free speech tradition that the American Civil Liberties Union inherited and built upon.

This paper has tried to show that Home's dominant political character was compatible with and supportive of the anarchist-communist movement current in America during its first decade and was not based on a vague notion of "individualism" or a more precise anarchist individualism. The periodicals *Discontent* and *The Demonstrator* were anarchist-communist and working from these principles they boldly and clearly addressed two issues that have fueled major social, political, and legal debates through the entire twentieth century.<sup>90</sup>

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90 Sexual politics is another issue that was well represented in Home periodicals and it too deserves to be included in this paper, as first intended. Time ran out and I will have to remedy this in the future.

Our next idea of voluntary association does away with majority rule. We find that men and women naturally advocate new ideas and united around the most feasible plan of action in supplying their own wants, if the minority in giving up their ideas to the majority find in so doing that their best interests are threatened then they will refuse, and this refusal will always act as a check on the majority, compelling them to modify their ideas, thereby gaining individual liberty and a true basis of co-operation.<sup>14</sup>

This dual basis for voluntary association—individual liberty and voluntary co-operation—were frequently employed by Home colonists writing in *Discontent* to explain their social experiment to their readers.<sup>15</sup>

Home inhabitants writing in *Discontent* also described themselves as Anarchist Communists. The first issue of the paper announced

*Discontent* will first of all, be an Anarchist paper and will battle for the freedom of the human race from tyranny and superstition of all kinds and sorts. It will advocate communism as the ultimate idea, as we believe mankind must have an ideal to strive for if they are to progress and we can conceive of no higher ideal of excellence than that to be secured by the associated efforts of a band of brothers striving for the full freedom of all to enjoy life untrammelled by statutory enactments and deeply rooted prejudice fossilized by time.<sup>16</sup>

That the term Anarchist Communism was relatively unambiguous to the residents of Home can be inferred from the space *Discontent* devoted to clarifying the position of Anarchist Communism as opposed to state socialist and

14 Verity, O. A. "Do You Want a Home?" *Discontent*. 1:2, p. 4.

15 For example see Verity's "Some Questions Answered," *Discontent*. 1:15, p. 4; E. C. Miles, "The Problem Solved" *Discontent*, 1:26, p. 1; George Allen, "Co-operative Colony Fails," *Discontent*, 1:34, p. 1; George Allen, "Apologies," *Discontent*. 2:52, p. 1; George Allen, "A word to Inquirers," *Discontent*. 2:54, p. 4., George Allen, "A Misapprehension, Brother," *Discontent* 32, p. 1

16 *Discontent*. 1:1. p. 2.



anarchist individualist doctrine.<sup>17</sup> George Allen, another founding member, described himself as a “voluntary Communist... an Anarchist Communist.”<sup>18</sup> *Discontent* and its heir, *The Demonstrator* described Home to prospective members as an anarchist settlement and as “distinctly a place for Anarchists... Only the earnest and thoughtful, who understand the principles of liberty, are adapted to the life here.”<sup>19</sup>

The early work enterprises at Home were organized along the lines of voluntary cooperation in what would now be described as worker-self management. The “Agreement of Group No. 1,” organized to cut and market wood, set out equal ownership and proportionate pay by hours worked for its members. Members were admitted by group consensus and disputes were to be settled by disinterested arbitrators.<sup>20</sup> The first store in Home was built and run cooperatively and early on there was discussion over whether to use Rochdale cooperative principles.<sup>21</sup>

17 See “Communism Deduced from Liberty,” *Discontent* 1:37; W.H. Van Ornum, “Information for Mr. Chase,” *Discontent* 1:43; William Holmes, “What is Free Communism?” *Discontent* 2:44; 2:50, p. 2; “Comment and Criticism,” 3:4, p. 1; the running discussion on Anarchist Communism vs. Anarchist Individualism beginning in *Discontent* 3:8 and another entitled “Free Communism vs. Free Commercialism (i.e. Anarchist Individualism)” *Discontent* 3:26 on; and J.C. Barnes “Anarchy vs. Socialism,” *The Demonstrator* 1:26, p. 1.

18 George Allen, “A Misapprehension, Brother,” *Discontent* 3:2, p. 1. Allen repudiated communism in a 1912 article in *The Daily Ledger*, Jan. 7, 1912 “I recall the belief that nearly all of us had when we came here viz. That communism was the best form of cooperation. Several communistic groups were formed and sooner or later given up. Now few if any here believe in communism.”

19 James F. Morton, Jr. in “Home Again,” *Discontent* 3:41. The column “Association Notes,” with news about the colony included statements such as “Yes, we do desire additions, but we do not care to have any join us but Anarchists.” *Discontent* 3:3, p. 4. and “Home News” warned that “Home is preeminently place for hard patient workers, who can endure difficulties, and who would go through fire and water for the Anarchist cause.” *Discontent* 3:49, p. 4 and that “the life here can never possess great attractions for any save genuine, thorough-going lovers of freedom. For such there is a beauty and fraternal social life, which it would be difficult to parallel elsewhere. Those really interested in the Anarchist propaganda find this an excellent place for effective work for the cause.” *Discontent* 3:52, p. 4.

20 *Discontent* 1:29, p. 4

21 The April 1, 1903 *Demonstrator* described “our (not yet five months old) cooperative store was open a little over an hour on twelve separate afternoons” in March. The June 8, 1904 *Demonstrator* described the new Home Grocery Company store building as 24 by 40 feet

in practice to those who hold unpopular opinions.”<sup>86</sup> The series sketched out an argument for an absolutist position on free speech and press, weaving ideas about the value and function of free speech that only decades later began to find their way into American legal doctrine. These included concepts like the marketplace of ideas (in which truth is vindicated and falsehood defeated by more exposure, rather than less), that workers and their organizations were being gagged by injunction, that defining obscenity is inherently ambiguous, and making exceptions to free expression tended to subvert the general principle itself.<sup>87</sup> Morton insisted that “Free speech without an ‘if’ or a ‘but’” was the only kind worth having.<sup>88</sup>

Morton and *The Demonstrator* kept track of a wide variety of intrusions and limitations of freedom of speech in the post office (against *Wilshire’s Magazine*, *Appeal to Reason*, *Lucifer*, *Free Society*, in American universities (suppression of a student’s Socialist club at Washburn college, dismissal of professors and presidents in Rhode Island, Illinois, Wisconsin and California), on the streets of American cities (soap-boxing arrest in Olympia, Washington, right to assembly abrogated in Paterson, New Jersey.), in libel law (Pennsylvania law aimed at criticism of the actions of public officials) and in American immigration law (epitomized in the 1903 John Turner deportation case under the anarchist exclusion provisions). It also argued for support of and promoted joint action with the newly-formed Free Speech League in New York City. Agitation on behalf of free speech was described and vigorously recommended.<sup>89</sup> In a word, Morton tried to describe the problem and stimulate an organized movement for the expansion and protection of free expression in America.

86 *The Demonstrator*, 1:3, p. 1.

87 For example: Truth vs. Falsehood: “The best way to silence a liar is to refute and expose him; and if there can be such a thing as the abuse of free speech, its influence is easily to be overcome by turning on the light... The desire for a censorship betrays lack of confidence in the truth.” *The Demonstrator* 1:6, p. 1. Obscenity: “Unlike other criminal legislation, this [obscenity] statute created a crime incapable of exact definition... Everybody knows what burglary and homicide are; but nobody knows what obscenity is.” *The Demonstrator* 1:4, p. 1.

88 *The Demonstrator*, 1:6, p. 1.

89 See the last two paragraphs of “The Turner Outrage.” 1:34, p. 1 for advice and exhortations for action, including letter writing to periodicals, distributing Morton’s “Do You Want Free Speech?” pamphlet, sending money to Dr. E. B. Foote for Turner’s defense. Morton ended the article with the exhortation “Use all these methods, if you can, but at all events, do something and do it NOW, NOW.” [emphasis in original]



Abner Pope from *The Firebrand* case, Lois Waisbrooker's experience with obscenity charges for an article in the Kansas periodical *Lucifer* in 1892 and the series of actions against the Home periodicals described above. The lead article of the first issue of *The Demonstrator* noted that radical and reform periodicals "treat the issue of free speech as a subsidiary question, worthy of only slight and occasional attention"<sup>84</sup> and went on to announce

There is, however, need of a publication with which this momentous question shall be much more than a side issue. *The Demonstrator* hopes, to some extent, to fill this gap, and invokes the support and assistance of all who believe that in freedom of expression lies the pathway to human progress.<sup>85</sup>

Beginning in the second issue, Morton published a eight-part series entitled "Do You Want Free Speech?" on the front page of the newspaper. In this series Morton recognized a central paradox between the American formal profession of a system of free expression and its absence when it really mattered. This paradox involved "theoretically admitting the right of all men to a free expression of their opinions" while finding "specious excuses for denying it

84 A frustrated Morton wrote later that the erosion of free expression rights was due to "the criminal weakness of the American people, including ninety-nine hundredths of the radical and reform element, in ignoring the paramount importance of the issue of free speech." "Who Is to Blame?" *The Demonstrator* 1:35, p. 1.

85 Morton had placed the following item in the last issue of *Discontent* that indicated his interest in monitoring and pursuing this issue: "Do not forget to send in all the news relating in any way to the subject of free speech. Let me have PROMPT information with regard to any case of persecution. Also send me any newspaper or magazine articles or notes in any way bearing on the subject." "Off and On." *Discontent* 4:30, p. 2. Other professions of the centrality of the free speech/press question to Morton and *The Demonstrator* include "Demonstrative," 1:1, p. 2: "We shall continue to lay special stress on free speech."; "Misrepresenters of Anarchy," 1:11, p. 1: "The policy of *The Demonstrator*, in devoting its columns largely to the issue of free speech..." "Our Position," 1:15, p. 1: "Much of the attention of the paper is given to the overshadowing issue of free speech, which is recognized as the gateway to all other forms of freedom." "The Demonstrator's Future", 1:37, p. 1: "... paper whose special mission is to raise an unwearied and uncompromising voice in behalf of freedom of expression."

But the colony's rural location made for a pioneer experience, grubbing out home and garden out of near-wilderness.<sup>22</sup> The situation was not conducive to large scale enterprises and the economic structure of the community was fairly primitive and undeveloped. Such social experiments did not exist wholly outside of the larger society and they had to contend with social realities, even as they tried to mitigate them. As one "Home News" column put it:

While the present inequitable system continues, labor must be a sore drudgery, for the great mass of mankind, and local colonies and co-operative plans, valuable as their educational influence may be, can by no means be conducted on a sufficiently large scale to relieve materially the economic pressure. All we can do is to find means of working under somewhat more congenial conditions, with the companionship of congenial comrades, and of forming a centre for active propaganda.<sup>23</sup>

Many Home colonists were forced to look for seasonal work and live in the large cities of Tacoma and Seattle to earn money. Sardonic announcements of these comings and goings because "of the scarcity of the almighty dollar" appeared in *The Demonstrator* as someone having gone to "Seattle to market his muscle" or "serving a sentence in a dressmaking establishment in Tacoma."<sup>24</sup>

and open a little over an hour on three afternoons a week and averaging \$100 in sales. The Jan. 18, 1905 issue 12:19, p. 4) discussed running the store along the Rochdale cooperative system, which took place in January, 1906 (3:17). See also Sylvia Retherford's "Early Businesses in Home" in vol. 2 of "Compilation of writings and Photos Concerned with the History of Home" at the Key Center Public Library.

22 For example, the March 6, 1901 *Discontent* 3:28, described the Home population as "a hard-up crowd in a pioneer settlement rustling for a livelihood."

23 *Discontent* 3:49 p. 4. In the same vein Viroqua Daniels' report, "Home Colony," *Discontent* 4:19 states: "There is apparently, more backwardness in casting aside superstitions of the economic order than those of any other branch of "civilized" society. This may be but an appearance, as I do not know the fact concerning the economic conditions of the colony, and whatever the ideals of its members may be, the outside commercial pressure may possibly be too great to be withstood at present."

24 "Home News," *The Demonstrator*, 1:27, p. 4 (seasonal hop picking); 1:31, p. 4 ("More of the residents of Home are away at work this fall (1903) than at any other period in the existence of the place."); 1:44, p. 4; 1: 2:16, p. 4.

Voluntary cooperation at Home was most evident in its common or public projects. The community prided itself on undertaking these without the coercion or moralistic calls for civic duty characteristic of authoritarian social arrangements or for monetary reward. In the early years of the colony, the people of Home pitched in to build a waterfront park, rebuild the footbridge at the head of, and a floating dock in, Joe's Bay. Cooperatively raised buildings—including individual members' houses, several community buildings such as schoolhouses, a common meeting hall, library, and people worked together on several publishing projects and organized a wide variety of ongoing cultural and educational events. The production of intellectual and cultural events was particularly widespread and impressive at Home and these included lectures, reading groups, singing groups, dances, masquerade balls, outings and picnics, memorial celebrations (for the Haymarket Martyrs, for example), a Home band, and a traveling baseball team that played surrounding towns. The voluntary nature of these cooperative projects was touted in *Discontent*. The rebuilding of the footbridge, for example, was proof that “the old contention that public improvements would not be made if we had no government is childish. We have proven many times that this is not true here.”<sup>25</sup>

Another indication of the type of anarchism adhered to by the publishers of Home's newspapers is suggested by the literature they offered for sale to their readers. Virtually all of the books and pamphlets were from the anarchist-communist side of the movement (Michael Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Elisee Reclus, Emma Goldman) and none of the American anarchist-individualist writers (Lysander Spooner, Josiah Warren, or Benjamin Tucker, for example) were included.<sup>26</sup>

There is evidence directly from Home colonists that the dominant conception of Home was along Anarchist-Communist lines. What might have prompted

with no investigation. The Post Master General dutifully complied, and the post office in Home was taken away on April 30, 1902, causing *Discontent* to exclaim, “To such lengths is it possible to carry persecution for opinion's sake, in ‘free America’”<sup>81</sup> The April 30, 1902 *Discontent* was the last issue published, coinciding with the removal of the post office and consequent loss of second class mailing privileges.

Ten months later, on March 11, 1903, a weekly newspaper, *The Demonstrator*, with James F. Morton Jr. as editor and many of the same contributors as *Discontent* appeared, emanating from Home, but mailed out of Lakebay, a few miles to the south. The paper was immediately harassed by the post office authorities using the issue of second class mailing privileges.<sup>82</sup> This had become one of the ways federal authorities tried to disrupt radical publications because second class postage, at 1 cent per pound, made publishing activity economically viable. This was especially so for small circulation advocacy newspapers, dependent almost exclusively on subscriptions for operating money and exchanges with other periodicals for news gathering.<sup>83</sup>

A kind of critical mass seems to have formed at Home around the free press/speech issue, partly because of the experiences of Henry Addis and

March, 10, 1902.

81 “A New Infamy”, *Discontent* 4:25, p. 4. Dr. Richard Kielbowicz of the University of Washington School of Communications, an expert in the area of US postal affairs, can recall no other incident of a post office being closed on account of a community's opinion. The post office issue remains alive to the present day. Some years ago, the Lakebay post office was closed and a new one built in Home. The Post Office, however, refused to change the name, so that the community of Home has a post office named Lakebay, a community that in fact lies several miles down the road. Efforts by some current Home residents, including Sylvie Retherford, a grand daughter of one of Home's original founding families, to get it renamed for the town it actually resides in have been to no avail.

82 See “Important Notice,” *The Demonstrator*, 1:15, p. 2; James F. Morton, Jr.'s “Under Fire From Madden,”; “Our Position,” 1:15, p. 1 and “To Our Friends,” 1:19, p. 1 for accounts of the newspaper's difficulties getting second class mailing privileges.

83 See James F. Morton, Jr., “Edwin C. Madden—Assassin of Liberty,” *The Demonstrator*, 1:21, p. 1 for a description of the withholding of second class mailing privileges to impede and destroy radical publications. “A favorite scheme for strangling radical papers at their birth is to delay decision by petty objections and pretences of insufficient information, unable to advance the full rate of postage from week to week, is forced to suspend publication. This is the trick that was tried with *The Demonstrator* which made its application March 11, and was not granted second class rates until the end of June.”

25 “Association Notes,” *Discontent* 3:29, p. 4.

26 Another weak, but suggestive clue to what kind of anarchist politics Home residents seem to have adhered to is the contents of Alex Snellenberg's library listed in Communist and Anarchist Deportation Cases. Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, April 21-24, 1920, Washington D.C., 1920, pp. 125-126. Snellenberg was associated with Home and his family had summered out at Home. All the literature was anarchist-communist, none was individualist.

# THE DEMONSTRATOR.

Entered November 5, 1904, at Lakeway, Wash., as Second Class Matter, under act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

HOME, (LAKEWAY P. O.), WN., WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1907.

## AN INVITATION.

Will you come in—out of the storm, the darkness, the cold?  
The night is dreary abroad to the shelterless, or to the suffering—  
To the lonely, or sadhearted.  
Will you come in?  
It may be you need not our hospitality.  
That the warmth and glow of the inner life shuts out the strife of elements  
And creates a summerland within, where birds sing, waters flow, and music is everywhere.  
It may be the fountain of joy flows freely, fed by the stream of love—  
That power is yours thru consciousness of divinity—  
It may be all this—  
Will you come in?  
Greater need we have of you—to strengthen our fold that we may give the more;  
Share our sunshine, our warm hearth—  
It is full of good cheer, of kindness, of love.  
Let us join our forces,  
Give rest to the weary, comfort to the sorrowing, bread to the hungry;  
Let us resolve discord into harmony—bring the clanging, discordant tones to order;  
Let us give hope to the hopeless  
And freedom to those who are in bondage;  
Let us relieve the minds of men—  
Let us do these things.  
Will you come in?

—Jessie S. Pettit Flint, in *The Light of Truth*.

## THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM.

Dorothy Dix, in one of her comic creations of a divorce trial at court, relates the cause for desertion substantially as follows:

"Tell me," said the judge, "what excuse have you to offer for thus shamefully neglecting your wife, when, according to the evidence now before this court, she has done everything that a wife could possibly do to make her home attractive?"

"Well, your honor," replied the defendant, "I went away from home for the same reason that a mule jumps out of a green, luxuriant pasture on to a hard stone pavement, viz., to convince himself that he is free".

And possibly this explains why so many wives are left at home alone while their husbands are away at a club or in the saloon. The constant realization of being owned by their wives makes them restless while at home and anxious to be anywhere else to get away from that feeling. They are willing to lean against a lamppost or the corner of a building, or stand around half the night on a cold-stone pavement, trying to feel that they are free, at least while away from home. Wives are made unhappy, and

become cross and crabbed because they fail to find the happiness they expected, and neither of them understand that it is all because of having surrendered their individual freedom and accepted in exchange a social custom which makes them slaves.

People think that they must put up barriers, walls and fences to keep the home and freese sacred, and the very things they do to protect and preserve it tend to make it desolate. Husbands and wives set up the claim of personal ownership and exclusive possession, and instead of enjoying each other's society as they did before their marriage they resort to every imaginable deception to invent excuses for spending their time elsewhere. And chiefly for the reason that they can find no freedom in each other's society. This is proven by the difference before and after marriage. Before they owned each other it would have required bolts and bars to keep them apart. And even then they would have found ways and means to scale the walls, elude their guards, and put the dogs to sleep, while they made their escape. Look at the efforts made to thwart the plans of lovers and how invariably they fail. Look at the obstacles surmounted, and the opposition defied! Instead of wanting to get away, or shunning each other's society, nothing can keep them apart. And what is the secret of this unconquerable attraction? The fact that they are free is both the answer and explanation. Freedom tends to unity, slavery to rebellion. You may catch and keep a bird imprisoned in a cage, but you can keep him there only while the walls and doors of his wire cage hold him a prisoner. And so it is with human nature when imprisoned in the home. You can keep your victim there till a chance for freedom appears, and then, to your surprise, you find your prisoner gone. For the spirit of resistance, fired by independence, ever has, and ever will, defy all opposition. It is the one inheritance of man that has never yet been slain. It may have been subdued, silenced, and even crushed, but it has never yet been conquered. For the blood that flowed in its defense, and dyed the earth with a crimson red, was but the rain that watered the roots of its perpetual resurrection. It is the one persistent force that never knows defeat, and it defies both earth and heaven. It is the springtime of all inspiration with its foliage of "life eternal", and appears on all occasions when chafed by oppression. It perpetually confronts the tyrant everywhere he goes, and haunts him like a ghost, and from which he can not escape. It is the dream of happiness realized by those who

# DISCONTENT

"MOTHER OF PROGRESS"

Entered at the Postoffice at Lakeway, Wash., as second class Matter.

VOL. II. NO. 7.

LAKEWAY, WASH., WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 1899.

WHOLE NO. 89.

## A STUBBORN FACT.

That nothing occurs by chance, that every effect is produced by an adequate cause, no one who reflects, or reasons, can deny. That fatalism is a universal law must be conceded, for law is nothing more nor less than that all things which exist, occur, or transpire do so because of INEVITABLE NECESSITY. Everything that has occurred took place in obedience to this law; and coming events, which now cast their ominous shadows, will be shaped and controlled by this same eternal decree of destiny.

There is in the nature of man, in connection with his environments, that which requires and makes possible the prevalence of every known condition in the social and business world; in peace and in war. Every individual is precisely what he is from necessity, and under complete control of fate. In the words of M. L. Sherman "we find man to be a perfect bundle of incongruities, loving and hating, praying and cursing alternately, fighting with the ferocity of a tiger, and again extending the kindest sympathies toward the victims of his wrath. . . . The history of the world is a record of the doings of this accurately described individual in countless numbers; and coming events will be largely dependent on this bundle of incongruities."

Force rules the world, always has, ever will, and upon the character of the force depends all results. Good and evil are interminably entwined, and both have periods in which they predominate, as all history will attest as well as present experience and observation. Man is forever being acted upon by forces and influences which surround him as the sea encompasses all forms of life within its vast and varied depths; hence, he is no more a free moral agent than the weather vane is the director of the air currents that move upon the face of the earth. His desires come from natural causes as much beyond his control as the return of hunger, or the tendency to sleep; and these desires, which he did not create and cannot prevent, are the motives that lead him to act and make him what he is.

Opinions are in conflict on every hand; hatred, animosity, jealousy, contempt, ridicule and revenge are as natural to man as love, friendship, approval and good will. Selfishness and greed exist as naturally as generosity and benevolence, and the manifestations of these characteristics are dependent on conditions and circumstances, for man is simply an automaton in the hands of universal nature. He is the toy of that force which lies back of all life and shapes the destinies of nations, planets, worlds, and the universe entire. Being infinite it is incomprehensible, and all we can ever know of or about it is included in its manifestations. Standing between two eternities, well may we ask with Hypatia, "What are we? whence came we? and whither are we going?" There

are many people who seem to believe that man can and does decide his destiny, but the following extract from one of the profoundest philosophers of modern times will furnish all such food for thought:

"The earth has its ever changing circuits. Where the arctic circle now is, probably was once the torrid zone, as the bodies of large elephants seem to attest. Land is rising here and sinking there. Islands are forming everywhere in the Pacific, so much in line as to make it in time a new continent. So nations, offspring of the earth, rise and fall. For a time they flourish, then luxury, oppression and corruption send them to decay, and a new birth begins. Egypt and Rome for example."

All this is the result of immutable law, and nothing is more firmly established than the fact that history repeats itself. All changes occur in cycles. Now what are the signs of the times, and whither are we drifting? I say drifting because, despite individual efforts in various directions, there exists a mighty undercurrent in human affairs which carries nations on to success, or to destruction. We see reform writers and speakers all over the country, and yet their combined efforts fail to retard the impending crisis; and as a nation we are steadily drifting to destruction under the influence of law and force which they do not touch and cannot reach. Every paper which proclaims the prevalence of injustice and oppression, which wars against the encroachments upon natural rights and individual freedom merely protests and points out the danger without the ability to ward off or prevent it. Selfishness and greed are now in the ascendancy, and their domination in the sway of courts and commerce; their influence upon honor and honesty is such that principle has surrendered to profit, and the day of doom is hastening with accelerated pace.

O. B. SENYER.

The sweetest meanings of love are never spoken; language cannot convey its significance any more than it can translate the perfume of flowers. One might as well try to dissect music as to analyze love, for, though it is easy to say that we love, who can say why we love. Let us lay up stores of love, for we must realize that love is a great mystery as well as a great necessity, forming the very foundation of morality and happiness. There is no fertilizer like love for the human heart, no matter how poor it may be it will enrich it; no matter how barren it will fructify it, cause to bud and blossom with tropical richness, while its atmosphere is that of eternal summer.—Selected.

A girl told me today that a rude man annoyed her by staring at her in a public conveyance. It never occurred to her that it takes four eyes to make a stare annoying.—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

## A LITTLE TOO SWEEPING.

I heartily endorse Comrade Adams' article in *DISCONTENT*, No. 55. I have known S. D. for a number of years and know him to be one of the most self-sacrificing, generous-hearted workers for freedom that ever lived, but I agree with Comrade Adams that our brother is a little too sweeping in his charges of dups and fraud, and sorry that, despite his honest intentions of treating an opponent fairly, he has yet to learn that the climax to freehought is tolerance of other peoples' honest views. I personally know many of the best workers in freedom's cause who are above suspicion and yet believe in the continuity of life, and, although personally I have never witnessed phenomena that I could not account for on perfectly natural and material grounds, I nevertheless believe others have witnessed phenomena that cannot be satisfactorily accounted for on any other grounds than as coming from unseen intelligences outside of and independent of themselves; and yet what little investigations I have made personally have in my belief been fraudulent, despite the fact that we are so often reminded that fraud is not practiced in private home circles among our personal friends.

I have seen several of these mediums and unless they can produce better evidence of spirit return than anything exhibited in my presence I fear I will have to remain a doubting Thomas. I am, and have been, wide open to conviction, and when I see or hear anything that will stand the test of my reason and common sense I'll not sneeze off and hide the light under a material bushel, but will set her up on the top shelf for all to see what Jesus and the spirits have done for me.

As to a certain automatic message in pencil that was handed me on a certain occasion by an occult lady with a big O, and signed Truth, to me it was about as fairly a message as I ever got, and I know others that seemed to bear the stamp of truth from the same source that were so misleading as to deceive the very elect. But I admire the spirit that prompted Comrade Adams to call down our mutual brother and comrade, S. D. I'll go one-fourth of the cost of distributing *DISCONTENT*, containing the discussion between the gladiators S. D. and J. W. A., to readers of Free Society. Now, lay on McDuff, and let's watch the fury.

J. ALLEN EVANS.

## RODDIE, LA.

### UNWELCOME CHILDREN.

Robert G. Ingersoll, at the annual meeting of the Free Religious Association in Boston, on June 2, spoke in part as follows:

For thousands of years men and women have been trying to reform the world. Why have they failed? I will tell you why. Ignorance, poverty and vice are populating the world. The gutter is a nursery. People unable to support

themselves fill the tenements, the huts and hovels with children. They depend on the Lord, on luck, and charity. They are not intelligent enough to think about consequences, or to feel responsibility. At the same time they don't want children, because a child is a curse—a curse to them and to itself. The babe is not welcome because it is a burden.

These unwelcome children fill the jails and prisons, the asylums and hospitals, and they crowd the scaffolds. A few are rescued by chance or charity, but the great majority are failures. They become vicious, ferocious. They live by fraud and violence, and bequeath their vices to their children. Against this inundation of vice the forces of reform are helpless; and charity itself becomes an unconscious promoter of crime.

Intelligence is the only lever capable of raising mankind. The question is, can we prevent the ignorant and the poor and the vicious from filling the world with their children? Can we prevent this Missouri of ignorance and vice from emptying into the Mississippi of civilization? Must the world forever remain the victim of ignorant passion? Can the world be civilized to that degree that consequences will be taken into consideration by all?

Passion is, and always has been, deaf. These weapons of reform are substantially useless. Criminals, tramps and beggars and failures are increasing every day. The prisons, jails, poorhouses and asylums are crowded. Religion is helpless. Law can punish, but it can neither reform criminals nor prevent crime. The tide of vice is rising. The war that is now being waged against the forces of evil is as hopeless as the battle of the freeths against the darkness of the night.

There is but one hope. Ignorance, poverty and vice must stop populating the world. This cannot be done by moral suasion. This cannot be done by talk or example. This cannot be done by religion or law; by priest or hangman. This cannot be done by force, physical or moral.

To accomplish this there is but one way. Science must make woman the owner, the mistress, of herself. Science, the only savior of mankind, must put it in the power of woman to decide for herself whether she will or will not become a mother. This is the solution of the whole question. This free woman. The babes that are born will be welcome. They will be clasped by glad hands to happy breasts. They will fill homes with light and joy.

I look forward to the time when men and women, by reason of their knowledge of consequences, of the morality born of intelligence, will refuse to perpetrate disease and pain—will refuse to fill the world with failures. When that time comes the prison walls will fall, the dungeons will be flooded with light, and the shadow of the scaffold will cease to curse the earth.



LeWarne to characterize Home as an individualist colony? A number of possibilities come to mind.

Home described itself as a place where people lived “individualistic” and not “communistic.” to describe its two-acre per member program. The Association did not prescribe collective enterprises or living and eating arrangements, nor did it proscribe them. There is no neat programmatic evidence, neatly recorded by a Home bureaucratic apparatus, of anarchist-communist practice for the historian to rely on. One could get the impression from a narrow reading of only the colony news columns and Association documents that the community’s emphasis on tolerance and individual freedom best fit an individualist social philosophy. These elements would be more in keeping with American myth and tradition and may have better survived the slowly changing character of Home from an anarchist colony to a more mainstream, rural town with an interesting history.<sup>27</sup>

The matter of time is also crucial in talking about individuals and a community that were evolving and a characterization of Home at one point will not be applicable at another. To understand what animated the founding and early years of the Home colony one has to look at the hopes, pronouncements, and practices of that period.

The ambiguity over the individualist vs. anarchist communist character of early Home was abetted by the well-meaning historical journalism of Stewart Holbrook in a three-part series entitled, “Home Sweet Home: The Anarchists of Joe’s Bay.” In it Holbrook makes the flat, but inaccurate statement, that “The founding triumvirate, it should be stressed, wanted no form of communism or socialism.”<sup>28</sup> A filter of cold-war ideology (the post-1919 and ever popular anti-anarchist varieties) may intrude in trying to look back at assessing Home and help obscure its character by measuring it against certain loaded

After the noon recess, presiding Judge Hanford unexpectedly and dramatically announced that he had read the offending article over lunch and did not consider it either obscene nor unmailable. He went on, in Morton’s recount of the court session, to note that if “such an article should be held to form a legitimate basis for indictment, a vast burden would be placed on courts in the future to select the small amount of mailable material from the enormous quantity which was unmailable.”<sup>75</sup> The jury was directed to deliver a not guilty verdict and the *Discontent* case was characterized as “the most liberal judicial opinion secured during nearly thirty years of struggle with the Comstock law.”<sup>76</sup> The *Tacoma News* acknowledged the acquittal, but warned that the “Anarchists and free lovers at Home should publish no more such indecent rot.”<sup>77</sup>

But Home’s troubles were not over. The same grand jury that dropped Govan’s indictment laid new obscenity charges against 76-year-old Lois Waisbrooker, editor and publisher of *Clothed With the Sun*, a monthly paper that pushed for women’s emancipation and discussed sexual politics, for an article entitled “The Awful Fate of Fallen Women.” *Discontent* described the indicted article as “simply a burning protest against the wrongs inflicted by society on women.”<sup>78</sup> The *Tacoma Ledger* described the literature coming out of Home as “actual filth,” and referred to Waisbrooker and her paper as “the worst... the work of an old woman, apparently a senile pervert.”<sup>79</sup>

The grand jury also indicted the community’s postmistress, Mattie D. Penhallow, for mailing the “obscene” periodical and Waisbrooker and Penhallow were tried on July 15, 1902 in Tacoma. Waisbrooker was found guilty and fined \$100 and Penhallow was acquitted.

But without waiting for a determination of guilt, the March grand jury made the extraordinary recommendation that the US Postmaster close the Home post office permanently, because “it is used by anarchists and free lovers”<sup>80</sup>

27 See Bruce Rushton “Home has Outlasted its Critics: Former Utopian Community Considered for Historic District Status. *Tacoma News Tribune*, June 15, 1988. Home was granted this status.

28 *The Oregonian*, Dec. 5, 1937. Sylvia Retherford also wrestles with the awkward political terminology with only slightly more success in trying to describe Home’s social relations: “The village these three families founded was not to be socialist or communist; each family was to maintain itself; however, it was envisioned that there would be informal cooperation and barter.” *Home at Home*, Home, WA., Sylvia Retherford, 1982. p. 20.

*Sex Radicals: Free Love in High Victorian America*, Lawrence, Regents Press of Kansas, 1977, p. 37, characterizes them as “methods that bordered on entrapment.”

75 James F. Morton, “Victory,” *Discontent*, 4:25, p. 1.

76 Ibid.

77 Quoted in “Two Views,” *Discontent*, 4:25, p. 4. The other Tacoma newspaper, *The Sun-Democrat* applauded the verdict.

78 “Our Defence Fund.” *Discontent*, 4:30, p. 4.

79 “Not Many Places Like Home,” *Tacoma Daily Ledger* of March 8, 1902.

80 J. W. Gaskine. “The Federal Grand Jury and the Home Post Office.” *Tacoma Daily Ledger*

spared becoming the object of mob action coming from Tacoma and this case and the Waisbrooker-Penhallow case to be described shortly, were unquestionably an effort by the authorities to strike “a blow against Anarchy.”<sup>69</sup>

This time the newspaper defended itself vigorously and James F. Morton, Jr. seems to have played a role in the change in tactics. Morton had arrived in June, 1901 after Govan’s first arrest, to live at Home and work on *Discontent*. He penned the appeal “To the Liberal Public” in the November 13, 1901 issue of the paper that urged wide publicity for the case and declared that the “comrades at Home do not propose to surrender their liberties without testing the matter thoroughly. They know their rights and are determined to maintain them.”<sup>70</sup> He castigated Liberals for not defending Anarchists during the hysteria immediately following the McKinley assassination and presented *The Demonstrator’s* free press case as an opportunity for atonement.<sup>71</sup> Two weeks later he worried about the strange reluctance of various sectors of the state-socialist movement to wake up to the danger of free press issues and protect the principle before it was weakened and efforts were focused on their press organs.<sup>72</sup>

A defense fund was begun and contributions flowed in from every region of the country and some parts outside it and soon surpassed their \$500 goal, in spite of efforts by the post office to disrupt the mailing of the paper.<sup>73</sup>

After last minute jockeying by the grand jury, which dropped Govan’s indictment, the trial proceeded on March 11, 1902. The prosecution began its case during the morning session examining C. L. Wayland, the man who sought out a subscription to *Discontent* with an eye toward initiating legal action.<sup>74</sup>

69 *Discontent*, 4:9, p. 1, quoting the *Tacoma News*. The *Tacoma Daily Ledger* of March 8, 1902 printed a self-congratulatory column about how the irate citizens of Tacoma had refrained from mob violence against the Home Colony following the McKinley assassination in the previous autumn leaving the matter of Home “to the courts with full confidence that justice would be done. The report of the grand jury shows the subject has not been overlooked.”

70 *Discontent*, 4:9, p. 1.

71 “Off and On.” *Discontent*, 4:9, p. 2.

72 “Off and On.” *Discontent*, 4:11, p. 2.

73 William Platt. “A British Protest.” *Discontent*, 4:20, p. 1. O. A. Verity, “Defence Fund Closed.” *Discontent*, 4:22, p. 4 and James F. Morton Jr., “Discontent Held Up!” *Discontent*, 4:14. A total of \$650.96 was raised and the fund was used to help the defense of editor Lois Waisbrooker and postmistress Mattie Penhallow as well.

74 This was standard practice of bringing action under the Comstock Law. Hal Sears in *The*

terms.<sup>29</sup> It seems more fruitful to try to understand Home within its own context and from the words of its own members. The preponderance of evidence here is that Home was created and initially largely populated by anarchists who believed in the centrality of individual freedom and radical voluntary cooperation or anti-authoritarian socialism and that they shared this conception with the larger Anarchist-Communist movement at the time.

## THE PROPAGANDA FUNCTION OF HOME AND ITS PERIODICALS

THE COMMUNITY AND THE PERIODICALS OF HOME HAD AS ONE OF THEIR PRIMARY purposes presenting an anarchist critique of American society.<sup>30</sup> This critique was a rather broad one, for where other radicals focused on a particular type of exploitation (marxists on economic exploitation, others on monetary reform, women’s suffrage, etc.), anarchists were critical of the use and maintenance of unequal power, of hierarchy and domination as it was manifested in a variety of social relationships. As one Home woman put it “acknowledge no one my inferior, no one my superior, no one above me no one below me.”<sup>31</sup>

What strikes a modern reader about Home’s turn-of-the-century periodicals is the clarity and scope of their social criticism. Their arguments and concerns have lost very little of their bite or relevance over the years. At least two issues, in addition to anarchism, women’s emancipation, and the labor question, were frequently addressed in *Discontent: Mother of Progress* and *The Demonstrator*. These were racial equality and the right of, and fight for, free expression.

29 Charles LeWarne described his “most distressing experience in writing about Home was to receive a kind but unhappy note from a daughter who was genuinely hurt because I had called her father and his friends anarchists. They were not, she said, they were fine up-standing men.” Paper given at the Pacific Coast Branch meeting of the National Historic Communal Societies Association. Halycon, California, May 17, 1986, p. 7

30 See footnote 17.

31 Sadie A. Magoon in *The Demonstrator* 1:13

## RACIAL EQUALITY

THOMAS GOSSETT, IN *RACE: THE HISTORY OF AN IDEA IN AMERICA*, DESCRIBES early twentieth century American attitudes toward race as a slow victory of the South “getting the whole country to adopt its ideas.”<sup>32</sup> Race hatred in the form of segregation, discrimination, and lynching were not confined to the South and there was a general acceptance of these practices among whites of virtually all political persuasions. Even the few anti-racists, according to Gossett, were “frequently hesitant, especially when they were dealing with questions of inherent inequality among the races. And often this ‘anti-racism’ is—by modern standards, at least—filled with ideas which are themselves racist.”<sup>33</sup>

The question of race prejudice in America became an important concern of the Home periodical *The Demonstrator* during the editorship of James F. Morton, Jr. He and several other Home residents and *Demonstrator* correspondents articulated a remarkably clear critique of race prejudice that remains sound, even by modern standards.

The race issue first appeared in *Discontent*. In an article attempting to construct a foundation of general anarchist principles to apply to social problems. In it, the author called for “Mutual concession and guarantee to all (irrespective of sex, color or fortuitous conditions of birth) of freedom, justice, equality of rights, equal participation in all the common bounties of nature and the full enjoyment of the products of each one’s own industry.”<sup>34</sup> The simple justice of applying principle without regard to race was repeated in anecdotal form in a column by Joseph Labadie (the anarchist/labor-movement archive in Ann Arbor, Michigan bears his name) in which he described helping a Black worker overcome by heat exhaustion, to the surprise of some children present.

This it succeeded in doing for a time, though its sister Anarchist-Communist journal in Portland, Oregon, *The Firebrand*, did not during the fall of 1897. *Discontent* publicized the case as “one more attempt to smother free press and free speech” and two of the paper’s editors, Henry Addis and Abner Pope, moved to Home in 1896, the latter after serving a four-month prison sentence.<sup>64</sup> In two separate incidents, the paper also defended the right of Charles C. Moore, editor of the Lexington, Kentucky *Blue Grass Blade* against obscenity charges for his satire of Christianity and urged subscriptions and contributions to the paper and its defense committee.<sup>65</sup>

*Discontent*’s turn for trouble came early on in 1901. A post office inspector, responding to a complaint by an Atlanta preacher, arrested editor Govan for mailing obscene material, a sex-related article by former *Firebrand* editor, Henry Addis. Govan was taken to Seattle and advised by comrades there to plead no contest for reasons of expediency, all the while disputing that the article was obscene. The \$100 fine was raised and paid and Govan returned to Home.<sup>66</sup>

On September 24, 1901 three of *Discontent*’s collaborators (Govan, James Adams, and James Larkin) were arrested under the Comstock law for “depositing, lewd, lascivious and obscene material in the mails.” This charge involved a free-love article by Adams that called for “uncompromising warfare upon marriage as exemplified in common usage, in common law, where woman is ‘given in marriage,’ and becomes a household drudge and a sexual slave in her husband’s home.”<sup>67</sup> *Discontent* viewed the charges as another incident in the history of persecution of sex-radicals in America and as an attempt to punish Home and its paper for their anarchist beliefs.<sup>68</sup> This persecution came right on the heels of Leon Czolgosz’ assassination of President McKinley and the blame for this act was laid to the anarchist movement. Home had only narrowly been

32 Thomas F Gossett *Race: The History of an Idea in America*, Dallas, Southern University Press, 1975, p. 254.

33 Ibid., p. 253

34 J. A. Shaw “A Declaration of Principles” *Discontent*, 1:13. The issue of race had been addressed before in the American anarchist movement. For example the 1883 Pittsburgh convention of the anarchist international Working People’s Association passed a manifesto with a plank that called for “Equal rights for all without distinction of sex or race.” Quoted by Adolph Fischer, Haymarket defendant in his sentencing speech. Parsons, Lucy, ed. *Anarchism*. Chicago, Lucy Person publisher 1887. p. 78

Paper” *Discontent*. 1:35, p. 4.

64 “Association Notes”, *Discontent*, 1:10, p.4

65 “Editor Moore Convicted” *Discontent*, 1:43, p. 4: “Proclamation To all Friends of Free Thought, Free Press and Free Speech” *Discontent*, 2:50. “C. C. Moore Acquitted,” *Discontent*, 3:14, p. 2.

66 See “To Those interested.” *Discontent*, 3:28. p. 1 for a fuller account of this incident.

67 James Adams, “A Healthy Comparison,” *Discontent*. 3:24, p. 2.

68 “To the Liberal Public” *Discontent*, 4:9, p. 1. See Martin Blatt’s biography of Ezra Heywood, *Free Love and Anarchism*. Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1989, particularly chapters 5–7 for accounts of prior legal entanglements of anarchist sex-radicals.

First Amendment was passed in 1791 and the dawn of legal recognition for constitutional protections beginning after World War I, the task of arguing for and defending the right of freedom of expression fell to social reformers and political radicals.<sup>60</sup> Among these, anarchists were early fighters for the principle of free speech and press to be applied broadly and consistently.

The anarchists of Home were no exception. State and federal authorities used postal regulations and obscenity and anti-anarchist laws to disrupt and suppress the periodicals emanating from Home and those same periodicals sought to present and defend an argument for wide latitude in public debate. They were also committed philosophically to the idea and practice of free expression as a corollary of anarchism's rejection of external authority and state coercion.

The first periodical issued from Home was *The New Era*, a 4-page pamphlet-sized monthly, in March, 1897 and was edited by O. A. Verity. Only a few copies have survived and anti-statism and working out the principles of the Home Association were the principle themes in those that did. This paper, according to George Allen writing later, was denied use of the US mails and died as a result.<sup>61</sup>

The arrival of Charles Govan, a printer, revived newspaper publishing at Home under the name *Discontent: Mother of Progress* on May 11, 1898. As mentioned earlier, this paper announced its anarchist and communist beliefs and during its first year was worked on by eleven to twelve (slightly over one-fourth) of the community's adult population.<sup>62</sup> While it hoped for the day "When freedom of speech and rights of all, Shall have men's approbation" the newspaper group concluded that it had to try and avoid the "oppressive hand of Anthony Comstock."<sup>63</sup>

60 See David Kairys' chapter "Freedom of Speech" in *The Politics of Law*, N.Y. Pantheon Books, 1982, pp. 140–171 for a history of social and religious activist's contribution to the defense of free speech during this period.

61 George Allen, "Our Paper," *Discontent* 1:35, p. 4. writing about *New Era*, he said: "We labored on, but Uncle Sam would not consent to our using the mails any longer, so we had to discontinue. We felt sorry about it but it could not be helped."

LeWarne was unable to find copies of *New Era* and Sylvia Retherford acquired a couple issues from the Labadie Collection, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. LeWarne mistakenly puts the appearance of the paper in June, 1897.

62 "Our Post Office," *Discontent*, 1:25, p. 4 lists eleven newspaper workers; "Our Paper," *Discontent* 1:35, p. 4. lists twelve "Association Notes." *Discontent*, 1:44, p. 4. lists forty-two adults in the community.

63 C. L. Penhallow's poem "Labor's Empire," *Discontent* 1:10, p. 1 and George Allen, "Our

They thought I was such a good man to do so much for a "n\*gger" ... This is a very practical example of the present condition of the public mind and how wrongly we have been educated. Why should the fact that this man was a negro, and not a white man, make such an impression upon children when a deed of kindness was done him?<sup>35</sup>

The failure of others in American reform/labor/radical circles to apply their principles broadly enough to include people of other races elicited critical comment in *Discontent*. The Los Angeles reform periodical *Thoughts of the Hour* was reproved for wanting to impose an extremely punitive tax on the Chinese.<sup>36</sup> A columnist, who signed herself "One of the Sisters," countered the racial and ethnic fears evident in a poem in the popular *Youth's Companion* magazine which argued for restricting immigration. The Sister replied to the poem's query

O Liberty, white Goddess, is it well  
to leave the gates unguarded?

with her own answer

Aye, open wide the gates and let them in  
Children of Sorrow—black, white, brown and red  
Liberty, our "White Goddess" fears them not;  
Brothers are they, sprung from one fountain head.<sup>37</sup>

The chicanery and mistreatment of Native Americans was also noted in articles with titles like "Is the United States Government a Felon" and "Is the Indian an Anarchist?" which drew parallels between government proceedings against anarchists and the "claim of the Indian always that falsehood, perfidy and dishonesty characterize all transactions of the United States government with themselves."<sup>38</sup>

35 "Cranky Notions," *Discontent* 3:8, p. 2.

36 F. A. Cowell, "Various Topics." *Discontent* 1:31, p. 2 and James F. Morton, Jr., "Off and On," *Discontent* 3:46

37 "Open the Gates" *Discontent* 4:12, p. 3.

38 Emily Taylor, "Is the United States Government a Felon," *Discontent* 4:22, p. 3. and "Is the



The attention given to race in *Discontent*, was not systematic however, and it too slipped into racial stereotype occasionally by printing “jokes” that used “a darkey” as its ignorant protagonist.<sup>39</sup> These may reflect the influence of Charles Govan, the paper’s editor and printer, who had grown up in New Orleans and had not entirely escaped his cultural past.<sup>40</sup>

Race began to be taken more seriously as an issue when James F. Morton, Jr. began writing for *Discontent* and he minced no words in excoriating a fellow reformer for saying that he “was not shown any more consideration than we showed a darkey” at a Secular Union convention. Morton decried “this vulgar flaunting of race prejudice” and declared

No person who measures his treatment of another by the color of his skin, rather than by his intrinsic merit, has any business to be posing as a Liberal. A professed Liberal convention has no right to draw the color line... no public movement of real value to the human race can afford to admit sex, caste or color distinctions.<sup>41</sup>

Morton, who moved to Home in 1901 and edited *The Demonstrator* beginning in the spring of 1903, had graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Harvard where he became friends with the black leader, W. E. B. DuBois. Morton immediately made race a central concern in his paper, so much so that he was obliged to defend his journalistic focus in the tenth issue. “This paper is neither negrophile nor negrophobe. But it does hold that race prejudice must be broken down, before we can advance very far in the direction of human solidarity.”<sup>42</sup>

Indian an Anarchist?” *Discontent* 4:14, p. 3. Other Native American related articles appear in *Discontent* 1:24, p. 2 on cause of Apache Indian uprisings in Arizona (“The Indian is more human than are his savage exploiters of a whiter hue.”); 1:28, p. 2 (Bishop Whipple’s blaming US government for Indian uprising); 1:31, p. 2 (Uintah Indians).

39 For example see *Discontent* 2:5, p. 4 that starts “A darkey, being brought before a magistrate” “Third one so far” is penned in my microfilm reading notes.

40 For example, Govan wrote “with the exception of a few years, I’ll have spent the rest of my life in different sections of the south, and, while I find it more pleasant living in a portion of the country where there are few negroes...” *The Demonstrator*. 2:10, p. 3.

41 James F. Morton, Jr., “Off and On,” *Discontent* 3:46, p. 2.

42 *The Demonstrator* 1:10. See also Morton’s column “Demonstrative” 1:29, p. 2. “Without doubt, some readers are asking impatiently if I will never have done with harping on the

But the clear and uncompromising position of James F. Morton, Jr, and *The Demonstrator* on the issue of racial equality was one very few periodicals, even radical ones, took at the time. It is difficult to assess the effect these lone voices in a small circulation (around 1,000) publication might have had on the issue of race prejudice, but it was undoubtedly quite limited. But it is important to remember that racism became a very strong, widespread and virulent ideology in early twentieth century America. That it did not progress even further, is, according to Thomas Gossett, “largely owing to the people who kept the conscience of the nation alive with regard to the injustice done to minority groups.”<sup>59</sup> Morton and *The Demonstrator* earned their place among these.

## Free Expression and Free Press

IF CRITICIZING RACE PREJUDICE WAS A LONELY TASK DURING THIS TIME, SO was defending the principles of free speech and press. Between the time the

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5. Immigration into this or any other country should be open to all races on precisely equal terms.
  6. What is foolishly called miscegenation is in no way objectionable, and may be highly beneficial to both races concerned.
  7. The present status of a race in no way proves its permanent or even long continued superiority or inferiority of any race, as compared with any other race.
  8. The inherent possibilities of a race are to be measured by the highest individual it has produced.
  9. It is unalterably mean, as well as heartlessly cruel, to refuse to extend the hand of fellowship to an individual who is our equal in intelligence, refinement and character, simply because his family or race as a whole is on a much lower level.
  10. An individual who has succeeded in rising superior to his racial environment deserves not only full social recognition at the hands of his equals in culture and intelligence, but exceptional regard on account of his splendid achievement in surmounting the obstacles of birth and early environment.

59 Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America*, Dallas, Southern University Press, 1975, p. 431. Morton, after he left Home to live on the East Coast, wrote *The Curse of Race Prejudice*, 1906 and became an early member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1909.

as a group, had been categorized at the turn of the century by “scientific experts” such as Professor Cesare Lombroso, as a distinct criminal class having common physiological anomalies and afflicted with mental illness. The experience of being misrepresented and condemned as a biological entity (rather than a political one) had obvious parallels with racist arguments based on heredity. Racial minorities and anarchists were both victims of nature and evolution in this “science.”<sup>56</sup> Anarchists also had become the object of fear and persecution in America, resulting in their being added to the Chinese in the exclusion and deportation provisions of American immigration law.<sup>57</sup> There was a certain parallel experience shared between racial minorities and this political minority.

The unequivocalness and relative “timelessness” of James F. Morton’s critique of race prejudice is due partly to his intellectual style, working logically from certain given general principles. In a column designed to “nail the preposterous fallacy” that one need live in the South to pass judgement on the merits of race prejudice, Morton elevated the race question to a universal one and open to general principles. “Like other foul things,” Morton wrote, race prejudice “lives because its victims [those infected with it] are content to drug their conscience and stupefy their reason. Those who use their brains to think for themselves speedily outgrow it.”<sup>58</sup>

56 See John Higham’s chapter “Toward Racism: The History of an Idea,” in *Strangers in the Land*. New Brunswick and London, Rutgers University Press, 1988, pp. 131–157 for a discussion on the intellectual roots of race thinking at this time and Nhat Hong’s monograph, *The Anarchist Beast: The Anti-Anarchist Crusade in Periodical Literature 1884–1906*, Minneapolis, Soil of Liberty, 1980, pp. 26–32 for a description of scientific attack on anarchists.

57 See Nathaniel Hong’s “The Origin of American Legislation to Exclude and Deport Aliens for Their Political Beliefs, and Its Initial Review By the Courts,” *The Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 182, pp 1–36.

58 “Demonstrative,” *The Demonstrator*. 1:51, p. 2. Morton listed ten theses on race that he was prepared to defend. Theses 7–10 were aimed at refuting the claims of hereditary inferiority that had particular force and scientific backing at this time.

1. All social, economic, religious or political discrimination based solely on color or race is wrong in principle and demoralizing in practice.
2. To treat a race as inferior is the surest way to make and keep it so.
3. It is a disgrace to any association of any sort to draw a color line.
4. A mere difference in color should debar no person from holding any office or position which is fit to be held at all.

One of the clearest manifestations of race as an impediment to human solidarity and progress, according to Morton, was its use as a tool to divide the labor movement. He cited a southern manufacturer’s journal which “shamelessly rejoices that the negro, kept ignorant and humble, can always be used to break strikes, to destroy labor organizations, and to keep labor, black and white alike, in a condition of perpetual enslavement.”<sup>43</sup> A short while later he wrote:

The more study I give to the subject, the more I am convinced that race prejudice must be completely vanquished before radical social progress will be possible. The sooner we meet and grapple with it the better it will be for us. Race prejudice is one of the strongest tools by which capitalism divides and crushes the workers. Socialism, Anarchism and every other ideal of fraternal fellowship are absolutely impossible, while the disgusting emanation of barbaric conceit holds possession of the minds of men.”<sup>44</sup>

Racial attitudes and practices of organized labor were noted and either applauded or condemned. The formation of a Chinese laundryman’s union in St. Louis was announced and *The Demonstrator* hoped “That the A. F. of L. would have enough sense to see that race prejudice is its enemy and the ally of capitalistic greed” and grant a charter to it.<sup>45</sup> The removal of the color line for membership in the Washington DC bricklayers was greeted with the exclamation “Good!” and the same action at a February, 1904 national women’s suffrage convention was grudgingly pronounced “a tardy act of decency” that “is better than none at all.”<sup>46</sup>

race question. From the present appearance of things, I fear I must disappoint their wishes.”

43 “Demonstrative” *The Demonstrator*. 1:2, p. 2.

44 “Demonstrative” *The Demonstrator* 1:29, p. 2. See also “Demonstrative.” *The Demonstrator* 1:28, p. 2. “Race prejudice is fostered to divide and enslave the workers of the country. Are trade unionists going to be such fools as to play into the hands of their worst enemies?” Also “Demonstrative.” *The Demonstrator* 1:28, p. 2. “I am sorry to see trade unionists so shortsighted as to adopt a false principle, which may appear to bring a slight temporary advantage, but can only result in the last in plunging them into deeper subjection...If the negro, the Chinese and the Japanese cannot be received as brothers all hope of human progress is a lie...Nobody has yet spoken half as severely of race prejudice as it deserves.”

45 “Items of interest” *The Demonstrator* 1:28, p. 4

46 “Items of Interest.” *The Demonstrator*, 1:37, p. 4. The paper had to announce dispiritedly in

The practice of white mobs lynching blacks accused of various alleged racial affronts was a continuing object of Morton's attention and criticism. This "terrible outrage" was discussed in every third issue, on average, during *The Demonstrator's* first year of publication.<sup>47</sup> After describing a series of brutal lynchings in five different states the paper snorted, "And yet there are those who think *The Demonstrator* is too emphatic in its condemnation of race prejudice."<sup>48</sup>

While the focus and tone of *The Demonstrator* on the issue of race was undoubtedly set by editor Morton, others living at Home contributed to the discussion. Sadie Magoon, poignantly described growing up in the loving care of a Black woman in Bellows Falls, Vermont and being reproved as a child and later when she maintained an adult friendship with her, for "associating with a n\*gger." Sadie Magoon concluded her piece entitled "Color."

Well she knows I have kept that (childhood) promise (to love her), and I have loved other colored people, for her sake at first, but later for their own. Why should I shun or despise any of the human race because of their color. It affects me no more than the color of a cat or chicken. I admire either color on both. It is not race or color that attracts or repels me, it is the soul quality of the man or woman. Oh, for the dawning of a morrow when prejudice, inequality, and selfishness, which is the parent of both, shall be no more."<sup>49</sup>

There were some counter views on the subject of racial equality in the pages of the paper. One correspondent, F. B. Livesey, attacked the newspaper's position on race, using anecdotal evidence from personal experience to make his case.

a later issue (2:8, p. 4) that the white membership refused to work with Blacks. Suffrage convention noted in "Items of Interest" *The Demonstrator* 1:43, p. 4

47 *The Demonstrator*, vol. 1: nos. 8, 16–17, 19–24, 27–29, 34, 40 and 44–46.

48 *The Demonstrator*. 1:19, p.4.

49 Sadie Magoon, "Color," *The Demonstrator*, 1:34, p. 3. Other personal experiences were recounted by editor Morton about racist bravado overheard while doing seasonal labor in the hops fields of Washington state. "Demonstrative," *The Demonstrator*, 1:29, p. 2. See also a letter describing refusal to serve Blacks in a California restaurant and the correspondent's attempts to get an account of it published, only to have newspapers return it "with the remark that your article is too radical for our columns." "From a Personal Letter" *The Demonstrator*. 1:47, p. 1.

During Morton's absence on an extended speaking tour in 1905. Livesey was allowed to publish a particularly venal attack on Booker T. Washington and the supposed negative effect of education in increasing "impudence and crime" among blacks.<sup>50</sup> The piece drew several critical responses from the paper's readers. One called it "the most illiberal rigmarole I have seen in a long time" and pointed out that "impudence," in southern parlance, was applied to any "negro who asserts his manhood in any manner" and that in that region of the country 'impudence' in the negro is punishable by death."<sup>51</sup> Another announced that he was greatly pained and puzzled to find the piece in a periodical that had "such broad humanity especially in its treatment of the so-called negro problem."<sup>52</sup> Lois Waisbrooker, drawing on her earlier experience teaching and living among Blacks, corrected the "colorphobists" and pronounced Blacks "are very much like other people, will meet kindness with kindness and will resent insults."<sup>53</sup>

It appears that the community of Home, in its rural Washington isolation, had no permanent minority residents. Its diversity was ethnic, a mixture of native-born and recent immigrants. Cultural tolerance and respect seemed to prevail with a resulting co-mingling and integration.<sup>54</sup> There are, however, only a very few examples of racial tolerance at Home and they appear to come well after the peak of the colony's existence and consist of Home entertaining a Black baseball team at its home park and renting it's hall for a Black community outing.<sup>55</sup>

There were several circumstances that may have contributed to the anarchists of *Discontent* and *The Demonstrator* being sensitive to racial prejudice. Anarchists,

50 Francis Livesey, "Booker Cannot Answer This," *The Demonstrator* 2:4, p. 3.

51 Emanuel Quivers, "Audi Alteram Portem," *The Demonstrator*: 2:6, p. 2.

52 J. B. Stemons, "Defending the Negro," *The Demonstrator*, 2:8, p. 2. The paper responded that it "thought the Livesey article somewhat of a personal attack. Still, it did not wish to go so far as to deny it space, believing in the freedom of the press."

53 Lois Waisbrooker, "Call it 'Cat'," *The Demonstrator*, 2:14, p. 3.

54 Conversation with Sylvia Retherford, George Allen's granddaughter. October 7, 1990.

55 Radium Lavene, "There Was No Place Like Home," p. 14 (date of baseball game not indicated). Sylvia Retherford writes in "Fourth-of-July at Home," pp. 2–3, Vol. 3 of Key Center Library material that in 1924, the Little Giants, an all-Black baseball club from Tacoma "enjoyed coming to the friendly village of Home." and Sylvia Retherford, *Home at Home*, Home, WA, Sylvia Retherford, 1962, p. 53–55 describes the hail rental (event occurred in 1927).